City of Glendale

Glendale
RICH PAST.
BRIGHT FUTURE.

Board, Committee, and Commissions Membership Manual

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Dear Board, Committee, and Commission Member:

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a volunteer on one of the City of Glendale's boards, committee, and commissions. Our boards, committees, and commissions provide input and make decisions on critical issues affecting our City. Your appointment to a board, committee, or commission recognizes your skills, knowledge and commitment to our community

As an appointed member of a public board or commission, it is vital that you maintain the highest standards of ethics and ensure that the public's interests are uppermost in your discussions and decisions. It is also important that you are prepared for your meetings and activities.

Again, thank you for volunteering to serve your community as a member of a board, committee, or commission. Our City benefits when people offer their time and knowledge to our community.

Sincerely,

Rachel Reiss

Rachel Reiss
City Administrator

TYPES OF BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND COMMISSIONS

The City of Glendale's boards, committees and commissions (hereafter the word "boards" will be used to describe boards, commissions, and committees) are created by City ordinance. Members are appointed by the Common Council at the recommendation of the Mayor. Each of the Common Council's boards receives their authority by City code (the Common Council). Depending upon the Common Council's charge to specific board, the authority may be to advise the Council, to make decisions on specific matters, or both. The City has 11 permanent boards representing diverse issues and interests. Generally speaking, the boards fall into two categories: sub-committee and decision-making.

From time to time, it is necessary for the Common Council to create an ad-hoc board. The role of the ad-hoc board is to advise the sub-committee, decision-making boards, or Common Council on a specific issue. Once the ad-hoc board makes a final recommendation, the board is typically disbanded.

Sub-committees

Sub-committees serve in an advisory capacity to the Common Council. The information that members provide to the Common Council about the community's needs and interests can have a significant effect on Council policies and programs. Most sub-committees do not create or administer policy, programs, or services, unless this power is granted to them by the Common Council. Currently, none of the City of Glendale's sub-committees have the power to create or administer policy, programs, or services.

Sub-committees:
Legislative, Judiciary & Finance Committee
Public Safety/Public Works Committee
Water Utility Board

Decision-making boards

Decision-making boards have been established to render decisions on behalf of the Mayor and Common Council. They also advise the Common Council on policy or legislative issues.

Decision-making boards:

Board of Appeals	Glendale Visitor & Convention Bureau
Board of Review	Music in the Glen
Community Development Authority	Plan Commission
Glendale 4th of July Committee	Police Commission

As a board member, it is your responsibility to be knowledgeable about the Common Council's policy direction and the purpose of the board. It is important that you understand the fundamental meaning and characteristics of the purpose of the board. Each board has a common purpose in that it will be their responsibility to implement Common Council policies. A staff liaison is assigned to each board to assist in realizing the Council's policies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS:
How to be an effective board member

The importance of the work board members are doing requires that members take an active interest in and be informed about their board and its issues.

Effective board members:
➢ Attend all board meetings.
➢ Are well prepared for all meetings.
➢ Actively participate in all board discussions.
➢ Actively participate in the research, projects and activities the board is engaging in or sponsoring.
➢ Demonstrate a willingness to work with the board and its members.
➢ Focus on issues being discussed and do not allow personal feelings toward other board members to affect their judgment.
➢ Recognize that the board must operate in an open and public manner.
➢ Are aware that the authority to act is granted to the board as a whole, not individual members.

Productive and efficient meetings:
➢ Begin on-time.
➢ Occur in a place that is accessible to all members and allows all members to be seen and heard.
➢ Provide information to be discussed at the meeting in advance of the meeting.
➢ Produce minutes that reflect the meeting's discussions.
➢ Promote the participation of all members.
➢ Adhere to the provisions of the Wisconsin Public Meetings Law.

If you are appointed as a member of a **sub-committee**, you may:
➢ Communicate community opinions, attitudes, and needs to the Mayor, Common Council, and City staff.
➢ Study policies, programs, and services.
➢ Offer new proposals and recommend changes in policies, programs, and services.
➢ Forward recommendations to the Common Council.

If you are appointed as a member of a **decision-making** board, you may:
➢ Hold public hearings to receive testimony from interested people.
➢ Deliberate the merits of various proposals.
➢ Render a decision on various proposals.
➢ If appropriate, forward recommendation to the Common Council.

Both sub-committees and decision-making boards should consider the following when presenting information and providing direction to the Common Council and City staff.
➢ All ideas should be expressed in clear and concise language.
➢ Proposed solutions should be viable and cost-effective.
➢ Recommendations should identify the reasons for the changes suggested.
➢ The advice should reflect a consensus or a majority of the board members.

ROLE OF STAFF LIAISONS

The City of Glendale assigns a staff person to each board to act as a liaison between the board and the City. Staff liaisons assist the boards in accomplishing their goals.

However, it is the board members who are responsible for actively participating in the research, projects, and activities the board is engaging in or sponsoring.

    Staff liaisons are responsible for:
- ➢ Arranging for meeting space and time.
- ➢ Notifying board members of meetings including changes in meeting date/times.
- ➢ Distributing agendas and minutes to board members.
- ➢ Providing public notice for use on the City's website of meetings
- ➢ Providing assistance in locating information on City policies, procedures, plans and activities in areas being discussed or deliberated by City boards.
- ➢ Assisting members in locating other resources external to the City

Staff liaisons are a valuable resource for board members. Liaisons can enhance the productivity and effectiveness of a board. Board members should not hesitate to ask staff members for assistance and information.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR BOARD MEMBERS

As a board member, you are expected to uphold a high standard of ethics. It is *extremely* important that board members avoid conflicts of interest, or even the *appearance* of conflicts of interest. The interests of the public should always be at the forefront of any board deliberation and decision.

- ➢ Board members must be familiar with and operate within their boards' governing statues and codes, bylaws, and state and federal laws at all times.
- ➢ To ensure accountability, all applicable policies and procedures adopted by the board should if possible, be in written form.
- ➢ No board member may make unilateral decisions or take action without the consent of the board as a whole.
- ➢ Board members must keep in mind that their mission is to serve the public, and that it is inappropriate to use board membership to create a personal platform, e.g., using board meetings to solicit work for a personal business
- ➢ Board members do not speak for the Common Council, of the City. They can only speak for and represent those opinions and decisions of their board, and only with the explicit consent of their board.

WISCONSIN PUBLIC MEETINGS AND OPEN RECORDS LAWS

Wisconsin Public Meetings and Open Records Laws (public meetings and open records laws) requires that all organizations, including public boards, that are engaged in doing the public's business ensure that the public has access to their meetings and information about their meetings.

With respect to the City's boards, the public must be noticed in advance of each board meeting. The staff liaison is responsible for ensuring that adequate notice is provided to the public, e.g. – all board

meetings are posted – at the official posting locations, listed on the City's website. Meetings are scheduled at sites and rooms that are ADA accessible. Additionally, the upcoming meeting agenda and prior meeting minutes must be provided to the staff liaison prior to the next meeting, both for board members and the public.

The laws also cover such issues as quorum, voting, and content of meeting minutes.

MEETING ORGANIZATION: MISSION STATEMENT, QUORUMS, AND VOTING

Parliamentary procedure and Roberts Rules of Order are tools used to organize meetings and discussions and ensure the opportunity for participation by all members. The City of Glendale recommends use of these tools by all of its boards. The following pages provide general information on bylaws, meeting organization, and voting. However, more specific information on how and when to use parliamentary procedure can be found in Appendix A at the back of this manual

Mission Statement

Every board should have a mission statement to identify by Board functions. The mission statement is typically identified in the City code and/or state statues for permanent boards. The mission statement for ad-hoc boards is typical identified as part of the Common Council's authorization approval.

Quorum

A *quorum* is the number of members who must be present in order to conduct official business. The quorum protects against unrepresentative actions by a small number of individuals. A quorum is a majority of the number of positions on the board.

Meeting Organization

After the chair has called the meeting to order, a board generally follows the order of business specified in its bylaws and on its agenda. If a board has not adopted an order of business, the procedure below is generally followed:
  ➢ Conduct Public Hearing, if applicable
  ➢ Approval of minutes of previous meeting(s)
  ➢ Public participation (of non-agenda items)
  ➢ Action items
  ➢ Reports of officers and standing (permanent) committees
  ➢ Reports of special committees
  ➢ Old business (matters introduced in previous meetings)
  ➢ New business (matters initiated in present meetings)

Voting

Wisconsin Public Meetings Law requires that meeting minutes record all votes taken including the motion, who initiated and seconded the motion, and who voted in support of or opposition to the motion. Voting by secret ballot is prohibited by the public meetings law.

The chair shall vote just as any other member of the board.

GENERAL TIPS FOR CONDUCTING MEETINGS

If you are involved with boards or groups of any sort, at some point or another you may find yourself running a meeting. Whether you are formally designated as a chair or just "filling in," the following are a few tips that can be useful in almost any setting.

1. **INTRODUCTIONS**

Never assume that people know each other. Attending a meeting for the first time can be intimidating. Allow time at the start of your meetings for introductions.

2. **TIME**

Make every effort to start meetings on time. Everyone's time is valuable. Starting late penalizes the members who show up on time. Finishing late can frustrate members and decrease their interest in participating.

3. **SEATING**

Seating is important and can really influence whether or not members participate. Is the seating comfortable? Can everyone see and hear? Are the chairs set up in a circle or lecture style?

4. **MATERIALS**

Make sure that any materials the board may need for the meeting are received by members prior to the meeting. Reading and/or reviewing materials at a meeting make it difficult to participate fully.

WHAT IS A FACILITATOR AND HOW CAN I BE ONE?

If you find yourself chairing or facilitating a meeting, you should recognize that you are in a unique position as compared to your fellow members. The following are some of the skills a facilitator should possess in order to be effective:
  - ➢ Accurately listen to and remember behavior and conversation.
  - ➢ Communicate clearly.
  - ➢ Analyze and synthesize issues.
  - ➢ Identify similarities and differences among statements.
  - ➢ Understand multiple perspectives.
  - ➢ Provide feedback to members without being negative.
  - ➢ Provide support and encouragement.
  - ➢ Accept feedback from members without reacting defensively.
  - ➢ Recognize and intervene on ineffective behavior.
  - ➢ Lead by example – model positive and productive behavior.

WHEN GOOD MEETINGS GO BAD
(and tips to make them good again)

1. Neutrality

As a facilitator, your role is to increase your board's effectiveness and promote the members' full participation by maintaining the process or rules by which the meetings are run. Facilitators need to be careful about acting and speaking in a neutral manner to encourage full participation from the group. Your role is to think about what is best for the whole group.

Common pitfalls:

➢ Perception that the facilitator represents one side of an issue.

Solution: Maintain neutrality, and if you can't, then let someone else facilitate that portion of the meeting

➢ Perception that the process is more favorable to group/side.

Solution: Ensure all points of view are being acknowledged; "Are there any other comments or questions?"; ensure all members have access to written materials

2. Ensuring Full Participation

In order for any board to be most effective, there needs to be full participation from the group. Multiple perspectives and opinions can help members to brainstorm better solutions to issues.

Common pitfalls:

➢ A few members monopolize the discussion.

Solution: Tell the group you would like to hear from everyone at least once before hearing from others a second (or third) time; thank the vocal members and let him/her know that you would like to hear from others.

➢ Many members do not contribute to the discussion.

Solution: Encourage members who have not contributed by asking them directly, "Sarah what do you think?"; make a general statement "There are a number of you who have not said anything – does anyone else have any thoughts on this issue?"

➢ Members do not have information/knowledge about the issue or topic.

Solution: Ensure that members receive information prior to the meeting (it's difficult to discuss and issue when the information is received at the meeting); summarize the issue at the beginning of the meeting.

3.   Controlling The Discussion: Focus, Timing, And Control
Most boards have many issues to discuss at their meetings. It can be a challenge to keep members focused on a particular issue. On the other hand, it can be just as challenging to know when to end discussion and move onto another issue.

Common pitfalls:

➢ Wandering away from the agenda and issues.

   Solution: "I am not sure I understand – can you explain how this relates to the topic/issues?"; thank the person and move onto the next comment.

➢ An issue is being discussed for too long and members are getting restless.

   Solution: Summarize frequently and ask members if they have any additional comments; watch and listen for signs that the group is in agreement to end discussion; suggest that the issue be broken into smaller pieces for discussion or be tabled for another meeting.

➢ The discussion is very heated and tense

   Solution: Use neutral language to rephrase a participant's suggestion or comment; when a member makes claims about an issue, ask her/him to back up their claims – "Do you have evidence of that?"; ask how many other members feel "this way"; suggest a break or table the issue for another meeting.

4.   Voting
Voting can be useful in establishing where a board stands on a particular issue.

Common pitfall:

➢ Voting procedures are not clear to the members.

   Solution: Make sure bylaws and other rules governing voting are clear and understood by everyone.

One Last Tip: Always Refer To The Group!
Be sure to ask the board how it feels and what it wants to do. It is important to give members the opportunity to weigh in on issues, whether substantive or process oriented. This can be very helpful to you, too. When discussions become muddled, tense, or go on for too long, you can refer back to previous decisions made by the board – "Remember when we voted on that?" or "Didn't I hear that the board wanted to move onto another issue?" By doing this, you acknowledge the board's power of decision making, strengthen your role as chair (and their support of you as a chair), and develop a clear picture of where the board stands on various issues.

MEETING MINUTES

Wisconsin Public Meetings and Open Records Laws require that minutes be taken for all public meetings. Boards may have a staff person assigned to record minutes. Boards operate most efficiently and effectively if minutes are available for members to read prior to the next meeting. A copy of each meeting's minutes should be provided to the board's staff liaison, as meetings and open records laws also require that meeting minutes be available for review by members of the public. Meeting minutes should always contain the following information:

- ➢ City of Glendale
- ➢ Name of the board
- ➢ Date of meeting
- ➢ Name and title of Chair
- ➢ Notation of members present, excused or absent
- ➢ Notation of assigned staff present, excused or absent
- ➢ Notation to the approval of minutes
- ➢ Record of all main motions, including those withdrawn, including name of mover, name of member seconding the motion, and major arguments
- ➢ Record of disposition of motions
- ➢ Record of the reports by officers and committees
- ➢ Summary of Closed Session topics, if applicable
- ➢ Time of adjournment

THE NEWS MEDIA

The news media has the important function of informing the public about City operations. In doing so, it provides a valuable communications link with the community. It is important to maintain a cooperative and open relationship with the media without violation privacy and other citizen rights. The City's boards work on issues that important to the community and therefore, may attract media attention. Typically, the media will contact the chair. If you do not know the answer to a question or are unsure about an issue, refer the matter to the City Administrator. The following are suggested guidelines for working with the media:

- ➢ Designate a spokesperson who will speak for the board as a whole. Typically, this is the chair.
- ➢ Be as open as possible, and keep your focus on the business of the board. Personal opinions, especially those regarding other people, are inappropriate. The news media is not the place to air dissatisfactions or carry on conflicts among board members or City employees.
- ➢ Keep in mind that the comments you make in public may also have to be made in a court of law. Do not risk your personal integrity, nor that of another by unwarranted remarks.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- ➢ City of Glendale:
  http://www.glendale-wi.gov/

- ➢ Department of Justice, State of Wisconsin:
  http://www.doj.state.wi.us/

- ➢ National Association of Parliamentarians:
  www.parliamentarians.org

- ➢ Robert's Rules of Order:
  www.robertsrules.com

Appendix A
Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance
Here are some motions you might make, how to make them, and what to expect of the rules

TO DO THIS:	YOU SAY THIS:	May you interrupt the speaker?	Do you need to second	Is it debatable?	Can it be amended?	What vote is needed?	Can it be reconsidered?
Adjourn Meeting	"I move that we adjourn"	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY	NO
Call an intermission	"I move that we recess for.."	NO	YES	NO	YES	MAJORITY	NO
Complain about heat, noise, etc.	"I rise to a question of privilege"	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE	NO
Temporarily suspend consideration of an issue	"I move to table the motion"	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY	NO1
End debate an amendments	"I move the previous question"	NO	YES	NO	NO	2/3	YES2
Postpone discussion for a certain time	"I move to postpone the discussion until…"	NO	YES	YES	YES	MAJORITY	YES
Give closer study of something	"I move to refer the matter to committee"	NO	YES	YES	YES	MAJORITY	YES3
Amend a motion	"I move to amend the motion by…"	NO	YES	YES4	YES	MAJORITY	YES
Introduce business	"I move that…"	NO	YES	YES	YES	MAJORITY	YES
THE MOTIONS LISTED ABOVE ARE IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE…BELOW THERE IS NO ORDER…							
Protest breech of rules of conduct	"I rise to appoint of order"	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE5	NO
Vote on ruling of the chair	"I appeal from the chair's decision"	YES	YES	YES	NO	MAJORITY	YES
Suspend rules temporarily	"I move to suspend the rules so that"	NO	YES	NO	NO	2/3	NO
Avoid considering an improper matter	"I object to consideration of this motion"	YES	NO	NO	NO	2/36	YES7
Verify a voice vote by a show of hands	"I call for a division'	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE	NO
Request intermission	"Point of information"	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE	NO
Take a matter previously tabled	"I move to take from the table"	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY	NO
Reconsider an action or issue	"I move to reconsider the vote on…"	YES	YES	YES8	NO	MAJORITY	NO

NOTES:
1 Affirmative votes may not be reconsidered
2 Unless vote on question has begun
3 Unless the committee has already taken up the subject
4 Unless the motion to be amended is not debatable
5 Unless the chair submits to the assembly for decision
6 A 2/3 vote in negative is needed to prevent consideration of main motion
7 Only if the main question has not been debated yet
8 Unless the motion to be reconsidered is not debatable